

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

SAJ-01 EB-07 ACDA-07 TRSE-00 OMB-01 NEA-10 ARA-06

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R 160850Z NOV 76
FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9165
INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
AMCONSUL GOTEBOG
USMISSION USUN
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, SW
SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER MEETS THE PRESS

REF: (A) STOCKHOLM 6224 (NOTAL), (B) STOCKHOLM 6301 (NOTAL)(

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. IN WIDE-RANGING PRESS INTERVIEWS,
FOREIGN MINISTER SODER TOUCHED ON MANY ASPECTS OF SWEDISH
FOREIGN POLICY, THE BASIC LINES OF WHICH, SHE SAID
REMAIN UNCHANGED FROM THOSE CARRIED OUT BY PREVIOUS
PALME GOVERNMENT. HER COMMENTS INCLUDED REFERENCES
TO RELATIONS WITH NORDIC COUNTRIES, USSR, CUBA, US,
UN AND PLO. END SUMMARY.

2. FOREIGN MINISTER KARIN SODER WAS INTERVIEWED BY
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INDEPENDENT DAGENS NYHETER ON NOVEMBER 11 AND

CONSERVATIVE SVENSKA DAGBLADET ON NOVEMBER 14. IN HER RESPONSES TO MANY QUESTIONS, SHE TOUCHED ON NUMEROUS ASPECTS OF SWEDISH POLICY UNDER THE NEW FALLDIN GOVERNMENT. HER COMMENTS ON MORE SIGNIFICANT SITUATIONS ARE SUMMARIZED BELOW.

3. USSR - IN ANNOUNCING THAT SHE HAS EXTENDED AN INVITATION TO VISIT SWEDEN TO SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTER ANDREY GROMYKO, SODER DECLARED THAT SWEDISH-USSR RELATIONS ARE NORMAL AND STABLE AND HAVE BEEN SO FOR MANY YEARS. SHE REFERRED TO THE "GOOD TRADE RELATIONS" WITH THE SOVIETS AND SAID THAT THE MORE PERSONAL CONTACTS ESTABLISHED THE EASIER IT WILL BE TO UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER. SHE REPEATED THAT GROMYKO HAD NOT BEEN TO STOCKHOLM FOR MORE THAN 12 YEARS. QUESTIONED ABOUT THE STATUS OF SEVERAL WELL-PUBLICIZED FAMILY REUNIFICATION CASES, PARTICULARLY THE AGAPOV CASE, SODER PROMISED THAT THE FALLDIN GOVERNMENT WILL BE JUST AS ACTIVE AND INTERESTED IN SOLVING THESE HUMAN CONTACT CASES AS WAS THE PALME REGIME. WHILE GOS WILL NOT DEMAND THAT THESE REUNIFICATION CASES BE SOLVED IN ADVANCE OF GROMYKO'S VISIT, THE VISIT ITSELF WILL BE USED TO EXPLAIN TO GROMYKO THE SWEDISH PUBLIC'S IMPATIENCE OVER CONTINUED SOVIET RELUCTANCE TO RESOLVE THEM.

4. NORDIC COUNTRIES - AS SHE HAS ON PREVIOUS OCCASIONS, SODER STRESSED THE PRIMACY WHICH GOS WILL PLACE ON ITS NORDIC RELATIONSHIPS. SHE ANNOUNCED THAT THE MINISTER OF COMMUNAL AFFAIRS, JOHANNES ANTONSSON, HAD BEEN APPOINTED "NORDIC COOPERATION MINISTER". SHE TICKED OFF A NUMBER OF AREAS IN WHICH SWEDISH COOPERATION WITH ITS NORDIC NEIGHBORS WILL BE DEEPENED: COMMON LABOR MARKET; ENERGY; INDUSTRY; AND UN POLICIES. WITH REGARD TO THE LATTER, SODER SAID THAT NORIDC COOPERATION TOWARDS SOUTHERN AFRICAN PROBLEMS WAS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT. SHE PREDICTED INCREASINGLY CLOSE CONSULTATIONS AMONG NORDICS PARTICULARLY ON ECONOMIC AND INDUSTRIAL QUESTIONS. A RECENT FISHING AGREEMENT WITH NORWAY PERMITTING CONTINUED SWEDISH CATCHES IN NORWEGIAN WATERS WAS AN EXAMPLE OF SUCH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COOPERATION.

5. FINLAND - SODER SAID FINNISH NEUTRALITY HAS ALWAYS BEEN OF GREAT IMPORTANCE TO SWEDISH NEUTRALITY POLICY. WHILE SHE DID NOT GO SO FAR AS FINNISH FOREIGN MINISTER KEIJO KORHONEN, WHO HAS SAID THAT SWEDEN AND FINLAND ARE SIAMESE TWINS, SHE SAID THERE WAS A DEPENDENT RELATIONSHIP IN THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE TWO COUNTRIES

THAT IMPLIES A SECURITY FACTOR AS WELL. ASKED WHETHER THE RECENT FINNISH DECISION TO BUY TRAINING AIRCRAFT FROM ENGLAND RATHER THAN SAAB-SCANIA WAS A SIGN OF "DEEPENED COOPERATION," SODER DENIED THAT THIS DECISION HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE POLITICAL RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. SHE SAID "FINLAND HAS DECIDED ON FACTUAL GROUNDS TO GIVE THIS ORDER TO ENGLAND. THE ENGLISH PLANE IS MORE MODERN THAN THE SWEDISH. FOR THE SAKE OF SWEDISH INDUSTRY, WE REGRET SUCH A DECISION, BUT WE CAN NEVER CRITICIZE IT BECAUSE WE REALIZE IT WAS A DECISION BASED ON FACTUAL GROUNDS."

6. NUCLEAR WEAPON FREE ZONES - SODER SAID SWEDEN'S POSITION TOWARDS KKKOHEN'S PROPOSAL FOR A NORDIC NUCLEAR WEAPON FREE ZONE WAS WELL-KNOWN. WHILE SWEDEN SUPPORTS THE CONCEPT OF NUCLEAR WEAPON FREE ZONES AND WISHES TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE CREATION OF SUCH, A NORDIC ZONE MUST BE BUILT ON A NORDIC BASIS AND NOT ONLY BETWEEN FINLAND AND SWEDEN. ONE MUST ALSO CONSIDER THE POSITION OF COUNTRIES BORDERING THE NORDIC AREA WHICH HAVE NUCLEAR ARMS AT THEIR DISPOSAL. A NORDIC ZONE IS, THUS, A MANY-FACETED PROBLEM WHICH IS BEYOND THE CAPABILITY OF FINLAND AND SWEDEN ALONE TO SOLVE.

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7. MIDDLE EAST - SODER EMPHASIZED THAT THE CRITICISM EXPRESSED BY MINISTER OF LABOR PER AHLMARK AGAINST THE GOS VOTE IN THE UNSC SUPPORTING THE PLO'S RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MIDDLE EAST DISCUSSION WAS MADE IN HIS CAPACITY AS CHAIRMAN OF THE LIBERAL PARTY AND NOT AS A MEMBER OF THE CABINET. SODER CONFIRMED THAT THE MFA HAS RECEIVED EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN AND PROTEST FROM BOTH THE ISRAELI AMBASSADOR AND SEVERAL ARAB AMBASSADORS IN STOCKHOLM. SHE SAID ANY MISUNDERSTANDINGS HAD NOW BEEN CLEARED UP. GOS POLICY REMAINS THE SAME AS UNDER THE PALME GOVERNMENT, I.E., THAT THE BEST WAY TO BEGIN NEGOTIATIONS IS TO LET ALL PARTIES TO THE DISPUTE HAVE THEIR SAY. BECAUSE THE FALLDIN GOVERNMENT IS NEW, HOWEVER, IT WAS FELT BEST TO ACCOMPANY THE SWEDISH VOTE IN SUPPORT OF THE PLO WITH AN EXPLANATION OF SWEDISH CONCERN OVER CERTAIN ASPECTS
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OF PLO ACTIVITY. SHE SAID THE SAME EXPLANATION HAD BEEN MADE MANY TIMES BY FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER SVEN ANDERSSON AND OTHER SOCIAL DEMOCRATS IN THE RIKSDAG. SHE DENIED THAT AHLMARK'S CRITICISMS HAD EMBARRASSED THE NEW GOVERNMENT.

8. CASTRO VISIT - SODER INDICATED THAT IF FIDEL CASTRO WERE TO INDICATE A DESIRE TO FOLLOW UP ON THE PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT'S INVITATION TO HIM TO VISIT STOCKHOLM, THE NEW GOVERNMENT WILL RECEIVE HIM AND WELCOME HIM "AS WE WOULD WELCOME ANYONE WHO HAS BEEN INVITED."

9. US - ASKED TO COMMENT ON SECRETARY KISSINGER'S FORTHCOMING DEPARTURE, SODER SAID THAT GOS CANNOT RECALL THE KISSINGER ERA WITHOUT AT THE SAME TIME RECALLING SWEDEN'S GREAT CONCERN OVER THE VIETNAM WAR. SHE SAID A PROBLEM REMAINS IN THAT THE US STILL REFUSES TO ACCEPT VIETNAM AS A UN MEMBER WHICH GOS STRONGLY REGRETS. SODER PRAISED DR. KISSINGER'S DIPLOMACY FOR HAVING CONTRIBUTED CONSIDERABLY TO DETENTE, TO THE RAPPROACHMENT BETWEEN THE US AND CHINA, TO BRINGING PARTIES TO THE MIDDLE EAST DISPUTE CLOSER TO A

SOLUTION, AND FOR CONSIDERABLE PROGRESS TOWARD A RESOLUTION OF SOUTHERN AFRICAN PROBLEMS. SHE SAID THE FACT THAT THE GENEVA CONFERENCE NOW GOING ON CAME ABOUT AT ALL CAN BE ATTRIBUTED LARGELY TO THE EFFORTS OF DR KISSINGER.

10. UN - SODER SAID THAT SWEDEN IS THE SECOND LARGEST CONTRIBUTOR TO THE UNDEP AND THE LARGEST CONTRIBUTOR TO UNICER. SWEDEN, TOGETHER WITH THE OTHER NORDIC COUNTRIES, IS ATTEMPTING TO PERSUADE OTHER NATIONS, PARTICULARLY EASTERN BLOC NATIONS, TO MEET THEIR FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS TO THE UN. SWEDEN NOW CONTRIBUTES 27 MILLION KRONER ANNUALLY TO THE UN AND THE FACT THAT THIS AMOUNT IS CONSIDERABLY HIGHER THAN ITS OWN OBLIGATIONS IS AN EXPRESSION OF SWEDISH SOLIDARITY WITH AND CONFIDENCE IN THE UN.

11. COMMENT: THE TWO PRESS INTERVIEWS TOGETHER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CONTAIN SODER'S MOST EXTENSIVE REMARKS ON THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE FALLDIN GOVERNMENT. HER COMMENTS INDICATE AGAIN THAT LITTLE OR NO CHANGE WILL COME ABOUT IN FOREIGN POLICY AS A RESULT OF THE CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT. SEVERAL SWEDISH COMMENTATORS HAVE NOTED THAT THE FALLDIN GOVERNMENT'S FOREIGN POLICY IS NOTHING MORE THAN THE PALME GOVERNMENT'S FOREIGN POLICY WITHOUT THE GUIDING HAND OF OLOF PALME HIMSELF. THAT CONCLUSION MAY BE UNFAIR, BUT THUS FAR NEITHER FOREIGN MINISTER SODER NOR THE PRIME MINISTER HAVE INDICATED IN THEIR BRIEF TIME IN OFFICE ANY INCLINATION TO DEVIATE IN ANY IMPORTANT WAY FROM THE PAST. WHILE IT IS TRUE THAT THE SOMETIMES EMOTIONAL AND BITTER RHETORIC OF MR. PALME NO LONGER ACCOMPANIES SWEDISH IMPLEMENTATION, SOME OBSERVERS SUCH AS THE ISRAELI AMBASSADOR TO SWEDEN DO NOT CONSIDER THIS VOID PARTICULARLY SIGNIFICANT. SMITH

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